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Governor Vetoes \$750,000 Grant to Lakeland STAR Academy

Madison, WI – Today, Governor Evers announced his line-item vetoes in the 2021-2023 biennial budget, striking down a very important budget motion that would allocate funding for Lakeland STAR School (7-8th Grade) and STAR Academy (9-12th Grade).

Lakeland STAR Academy, a Minocqua-based school that serves youth with autism, mental, and cognitive disabilities, was set to receive \$750,000. This allocation, which Evers similarly vetoed last budget, would have allowed Lakeland STAR Academy to expand its operations and serve an even greater portion of northern Wisconsin.

Representative Rob Swearingen (R-Rhineland) released the following statement:

***“I am beyond disappointed that Governor Evers vetoed funding to Lakeland STAR Academy. Yet again, he is turning his back on children with autism and special needs and the Northwoods as a whole. Coming from the former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, you would think that he values special education, but his actions unfortunately speak louder than his words.*”**

The ultimate goal of Lakeland STAR School and STAR Academy is to provide students with the self-confidence and determination to live independently and find gainful employment post education. Rep. Swearingen continued:

***“The Governor seems to have forgotten that autism is on the rise and the significant role that Lakeland STAR Academy plays in advancing special education in Wisconsin. As in the past, he is refusing to properly address and fund this issue, and his veto makes it crystal clear how out of touch he is with the needs and values of the people of the Northwoods. Evers could have shown that his educational priorities are in the right place, but he chose to do the exact opposite.”*”**

Representative Swearingen represents the 34th Assembly District, which includes the Northwoods counties of Oneida, Vilas, Florence and portions of Forest.

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